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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

K99

ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	A-00	CCO-00	CG-00
	CIAE-00	COME-00	CPR-02	CTME-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00
	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	L-00	CAC-00	VCE-00	M-00
	AC-00	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-01	OMB-01	DHS-00
	OPIC-01	PA-00	TFBI-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
	SCT-00	IRM-00	SSC-01	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	DPM-01
	T-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-00	R-00	EPAE-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/007W

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P 160744Z SEP 03

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0479

INFO ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS

S E C R E T MANILA 004927

STATE FOR EAP, EAP/PMBS
NSC FOR KAREN BROOKS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/16/2013

TAGS: PTER, ASEC, PREL, ADCO, OPDC, RP, TH, ID

SUBJECT: GRP ACCEPTS U.S. POSITION ON ACCESS TO HAMBALI

REF: SECSTATE 262487

(U) Classified by Political Officer Joseph Saus, reason 1.5,
(b/d).

1. (S) Secretary Powell's letter to Philippine Foreign Secretary Blas Ople denying access to Hambali was delivered September 15 per reftel. The GRP understands and accepts the US position.

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2. (U) Secretary Ople released the following statement the

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ARCHIE M BOLSTER
CLASSIFICATION: SECRET REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 16 SEP 2023
DATE/CASE ID: 05 JUN 2009 200706444

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same day. Begin text of DFA Press Release:

15 September 2003

Powell to Ople: US To Cooperate With RP On Hambali
Interrogation; RP-US Counter-Terrorism Partnership Remains
Strong

Foreign Affairs Secretary Blas F. Ople today said that the US government has formally agreed to the Philippine request to have access to information that Riduan Isamuddin, better known as Hambali, a senior figure in Al Qaeda and charged in the Philippines for the Rizal Day bombing of the LRT, might provide.

The Secretary said that this confirmation was conveyed to him through a letter from US Secretary of State Colin Powell dated 12 September 2003, which he received today.

"Immediately after the arrest of Riduan Isamuddin, better known as Hambali, I immediately made a formal request to the US government for access to Hambali. There are many questions that our authorities would like to ask and the US has agreed to pose these questions to Hambali, the Secretary said.

He added that in Secretary Powell's letter, the US expressed its commitment to cooperate with the Philippines in interrogating Hambali. "The US, which is in the process of interrogating Hambali and verifying and cross-checking the information given by Hambali, has also agreed to provide us with any information that would help us in our own fight against terrorism as well as information that might help save lives in the Philippines," the Secretary said.

He added that he has asked Philippine justice, security and intelligence agencies to prepare a set of questions that they would like to ask Hambali.

"I understand that because Hambali's interrogation is on-going, and because of the need to conduct his interrogation in a carefully controlled environment, direct access to Hambali at this time is not possible," the Secretary said.

The Secretary said that in his letter, Secretary Powell also reiterated US appreciation for Philippine partnership and cooperation in the war against terrorism.

On the issue of whether the Philippines will ask for Hambali to face criminal justices in the Philippines, the Secretary

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had earlier said "Hambali has been indicted in the December 2000 Light Rail Transit (LRT) bombing in Manila that killed 22 people. At the same time, he is facing other similar charges in other countries. In matters like this, primary jurisdiction is often determined by who has actual possession of the suspect. Of course we are interested in subjecting him to Philippine justice, but we will wait our turn, if necessary."

"Our commitment to cooperate with other countries in the war against terrorism remains strong. We are determined to work together with countries like the US in fighting this scourge," the Secretary said. End text of DFA Press Release.

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MUSSOMELI

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